

together representatives of 10 Federal agencies, private sector hazardous material shippers and carriers, and State and local governments to study cross-cutting topics in hazardous materials transportation.

Priority will be given in the selection of research projects to topics that yield results immediately applicable to risk analysis and mitigation and/or that will strengthen the ability of first responders to respond to incidents and accidents involving hazardous materials, among other topics.

My bill mandates that the research program conduct studies that will inform the routing of hazardous shipments and the development of regulations regarding mandatory routing decisions, the formulation of appropriate packaging requirements for those hazardous materials that are most frequently involved in release incidents, the development of reasonable models of State and local risk response and management plans that effectively address both safety and security considerations, and the definition of the roles and responsibilities of carriers and shippers in the hazardous materials events response and even event response procedures that can be consistently applied across all transportation modes.

Without the ability to adequately research and respond to issues in hazardous materials transportation that are multimodal in scope and national in application, our ability to make informed legislative, regulatory, and operational decisions regarding hazardous materials transportation is unacceptably limited.

Therefore, I urge you to join me in supporting the formulation of a cooperative research program for hazardous materials transportation by cosponsoring this important legislation.

HONORING VOLKMAR WENTZEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Speaker, on Friday evening, the German Embassy here in Washington will pay tribute to a man of extraordinary talent, a native son whose artistry with a camera has opened the eyes the world over.

Today I rise to salute this remarkable gentleman and his distinguished career. Volkmar Wentzel had an unusual introduction to photography. His father was a photochemist and built a darkroom at the family home in Dresden. He would send his boys there when they misbehaved. One day young Volkmar happened to hit the switch that turned on the red inspection light. There in the darkroom he saw the magic of photography for the very first time.

When he was 9, he and his father built a pinhole camera. It was another defining experience. In his words, "My camera became the passport to a fas-

cinating life." Two years later the Wentzels left Germany, escaping the turmoil that followed World War I. They started a new life here in America, in New York.

As a young man, Volkmar set off in search of adventure, but his grand vision to travel to South America stalled in Washington, D.C. By chance, he made new friends who steered to him to Aurora, West Virginia. A colony called the Youghiogheny Forest had been started there by a mix of artists, musicians, writers, doctors and others. It is where they spent slow periods during the Great Depression. They hired Volkmar to look after their property and studios. To our great pride, that is where his career began, in the mountains of Preston County.

The first images he captured were the breathtaking beauty of the countryside. Soon he focused his lens on the people. He gave farm families pictures of their children in exchange for vegetables from their gardens.

One day Eleanor Roosevelt stopped in Aurora for lunch. She was on a trip to Arthurdale, a New Deal Homestead community that she had taken under her wing. The First Lady bought a few of the postcards Volkmar had made. The real profit was not the price she paid, rather, it was the encouragement that Volkmar felt.

He was inspired to come back to Washington to pursue a professional career, and what an amazing career it has been.

I am sure that many of my colleagues have been dazzled by his book, "Washington by Night." It gives a dramatically different view of the city's best known landmarks. Even today, more than 60 years after he captured those images, they still enhance our sense of wonder.

The same is certainly true of Volkmar's long and distinguished career with the National Geographic. From the Himalayas to Newfoundland, his work gave us rich new perspectives, and new understanding, of the world around us. And that is what makes him such a compelling artist. His keen eye, his technical skill, his respectful nature, his gracious manner, all of these things are evident in every photograph he takes.

Of course I have a special affinity for his award-winning work in West Virginia, and I am always proud to tell people that Volkmar and his wife, Viola, consider Aurora to be their home and are active in the local historical society.

The Wentzels recently celebrated his 90th birthday at their Washington residence. Tomorrow's reception will allow his friends and admirers to mark the happy occasion and to salute the work of this outstanding talent and true gentleman.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBERS AS COSPONSORS OF H.R. 227

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman

from North Carolina (Mr. JONES), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN), and the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR) be removed as cosponsors of H.R. 227. I am the sponsor of H.R. 227, and their names were added in error.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to be able to join my colleagues who are here on the floor and will be presenting a Special Order in tribute to black history. I know my colleagues will begin an hour in just a few minutes, and I want to add to their offering this afternoon by sharing the importance of acknowledging this month with something a little bit different.

I am glad that through the calendar year we give an opportunity to be able to recognize the richness of the diversity of Americans. We are in fact a mosaic, not necessarily a melting pot, and we have many months to be able to honor so many different groups. And although this month has been designated as Black History Month, might I say that I look forward to the day that we stand as Americans and we are enriched by all of our cultures and that we respect them throughout the year, and that our classes throughout America are filled with anecdotal stories about all of the pioneers who came to this country, some of us quite differently.

I believe that Black History Month has been established primarily because, of course, the ancestors of those of us who are African Americans came first to this Nation in the bottom of the belly of a slave boat. But through that journey, that dark passage, we came to this Nation recognizing that its very tenets represented our ideals, and that is of opportunity, of sharing, of giving, of excellence.

So today I cite for our colleagues the importance of Black History Month, to be able to share those heroes. I may call a very limited list, because to call the whole roll would be enormous. I know they are familiar names, such as W. E. B. Dubois, George Washington Carver, or Sojourner Truth, the suffragette who may have been left unknown and unexpressed, but we know of her great emancipation work and her work on behalf of women, giving them the opportunity to work.

Harriet Tubman was known as General Moses, who helped to bring slaves through a free America. George White was the last African American to serve in the United States Congress in 1901

when he was redrawn out of this House through redistricting. He stood on the floor of the House and he said, "Like a phoenix, the Negro will rise."

General Chappie James during World War II showed himself to be a proud American, fighting against the forces of evil. The Tuskegee Airmen, which we honored just a few weeks ago. So many.

Then, of course, we bring ourselves to the civil rights movement. And who does not know the name of Rosa Parks, someone who was willing to sit down and be counted against, again, the evil of segregation. We know the names of those like Martin Luther King, but do we know Josea Williams and Andrew Young? These are great icons.

And of course we know that so many of them brought us to the point where we could stand on this floor, Dorothy Height, who is with us today, her great leadership, and C. Dolores Tucker, both women who were pioneers and willing to take a chance.

Might I share, Mr. Speaker, some of the local heroes of Houston, Texas.

Jack Yates, who founded the Bethel Baptist Church, which suffered an enormous fire just a few weeks ago. How grateful I am that that community has come together and has stood together to say that history is important, not just for African Americans or Houstonians, but for all of us.

F. M. Williams. His father had a school named for him, M. C. Williams. We thank him for the spiritual leadership and being able to be concerned about education.

Christie Adair, Moses Leroy, Zollie Scales are all great heroes in our community who passed on, but Beulah Shepard, who remains in her early eighties, is someone who believed that just one single vote could make a difference, and went throughout the community registering people to vote and empowering them. She was a political leader. Unelected, but yet a leader in our community.

So many stand as heroes. Esther Williams. She was one of the early precinct judges and a dear friend. She was always in the political organizational aspect of our leadership, and she did it to open the doors for others.

Our first judges, like Henry Doyle; and certainly some of our attorneys, like attorney Plummer and attorney Whitcliff; or our early doctors, like John B. Coleman. So many. Dr. E. A. Lord and many others who have preceded the Perrys, Dr. and Mrs. Perry.

So I list these names not because they asked to be listed, but because this month is extremely important in recognizing the fulness of America and the diversity of America and our willingness to acknowledge them by this month. Let us always be reminded that our brilliance, our greatness is because we can stand under one flag, differently but yet united.

I go to my seat, Mr. Speaker, challenging the City of Houston and our school district, the Houston Inde-

pendent School District, to cherish that history and ask and plead with them not to close Jack Yates High School, Kashmir High School, and Sam Houston High School because our history is so important.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, February is designated as Black History Month, and I want to take this opportunity to utilize this very practical observance, or practical designation.

The observances have very practical values. Some people have said they are useless and also they are insulting because our history goes on all the time. Why do we need to single it out for just one month? And if they are important, why only have one month?

Well, the way Americans do things, part of our culture and part of our way of life is we do highlight things, days of observances, holidays, special ceremonies, all these things are part of the way we capture people's attention.

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I am grateful for the fact that the whole month of February is designated as Black History Month. There was a time when there was no such designation, and there was a gentleman named Carter G. Woodson who resided here in Washington D.C. who worked for years to get a Black History Week designation.

The purpose for his Black History Week designation was a practical one. He wanted an opportunity to be able to highlight some of the achievements of African Americans over the years. So the fact now that television stations and corporations and various other people have pitched in and they pay homage to Black History Month is an achievement to be saluted. I congratulate the people who worked to have that done. It is for us, both black and white, to understand ways in which we can take advantage of the fact that this observance exists. You cannot separate American history from black history or black history from American history. The history of African Americans certainly is interwoven with the history of the United States of America in a way which can never be separated.

I would like to see us deal with black history as a continuum. The fact that people in small groups or individuals made contributions should not be played down. We are proud of the fact that you have a whole series of individual achievements that were highlighted when you start celebrating. We know that Thomas Edison had a black assistant who played a great role in what he did. Alexander Graham Bell. The inventor of the traffic light was a

black man. Crispus Attucks was one of the first people to fall in the Boston Massacre. Crispus Attucks was a black man. There are a whole bevy of achievements that are saluted.

We often bring up the Tuskegee Airmen and how it took black groups highlighting the achievements of the Tuskegee Airmen in World War II before they were recognized nationally by the entire American public. They did not fly in a segregated war. They were escorts for bombers flying to Germany in World War II. They played a major role and should have been recognized right away, but that was not the case.

So the separate recognition and the efforts made by people to highlight their group achievements have been very important. Dorey Miller, who was one lone individual, needs to be celebrated and highlighted and maybe we will one day get an appropriate Congressional Medal of Honor for Dorey Miller. Dorey Miller happened to be a black man who was in the Navy, on one of the ships that was attacked on the day of the Pearl Harbor raid. Dorey Miller was a cook. He was not allowed to handle the guns at all. He had never been trained as a gunner and generally was forced to stay away from any kind of combat training. But on the day of Pearl Harbor, Dorey Miller shot down two Japanese planes standing on the deck of the Arizona. I think it was, with courage and skill fought back and deserves to be recognized. And on and on it goes in terms of highlighting individuals.

I think as we highlight individuals, we also should understand that the social and political and economic history is much more complicated and has to be part of what we discuss as we observe Black History Month in February. I would like to call the attention of the Members to the fact that the Public Broadcasting System, which is under attack right now for various reasons, from the left and the right, is not given the kind of acclaim they deserve for producing magnificent programs. The quality of their programming is really outstanding.

They did a series on slavery. That series ended last night. I saw the last part of it. It is a magnificent series that introduces a number of basic facts that most people have never known and others have forgotten. It also highlights the passion and the fervor of the struggle, the struggle on both sides, the struggle of the African slaves to get free in this country and the struggle and fervor of the people on the other side who wanted them very much to never be free because they were property earning great profits. The magnitude of those profits earned by slave labor was discussed at great length.

Everybody in this country needs to understand the role of slave labor in the building of the wealth of America. They need to understand it was not just the South but New York City was one of the biggest, it was the second or